



## Senator Price does not speak for us or most Aboriginal people

The Central Land Council's 90 members said Senator Price neither speaks for them nor listens to them.

"She needs to stop pretending we are her people," said CLC deputy chair Warren Williams, from Yuendumu.

Meeting this week at Spotted Tiger, near Atitjere (Harts Range), council members said they are community leaders and senior cultural men and women who speak for the communities that elected them.

The members are sick of Senator Price's continued attacks on land councils and other peak Aboriginal organisations in the Northern Territory.

"We are tired of her playing politics with the grass roots organisations our old people have built to advocate for our rights and interests," Mr Williams said.

"Her people are the non-Aboriginal conservatives and the Canberra elite to which she wants to belong."

"She should tell us what her grievances with the CLC are, and if she can really and truly listen to us she is welcome to attend our next council meeting."

The council is well aware of the scale of the challenges its members and their families face and welcomes anyone who is willing and able to work with them.

"We have many good men and women who are trying hard to make our communities better places, who are desperate to be heard, and Senator Price's divisive approach isn't helping," Mr Williams said.

He said by generalising about Aboriginal people without any evidence and authority, Senator Price is hurting Aboriginal people.

"Our kids are the apples of our eyes," Mr Williams said. "We are not abusers. We love our children. We'd like to know where she got her information from. It is mandatory to report such evidence to the authorities.

"We can do without self-appointed lone crusaders who are unable to bring people of good will together."

There are many better qualified Aboriginal people, with decades of experience, who have been putting forward solutions for the care, protection and education of children who need a strong voice in Canberra.

Lajamanu community leader Valerie Patterson said Senator Price was misrepresenting the support for the voice in remote communities.

"I am a Warlpiri woman and I will vote yes because I believe that having the right to be heard by the parliament and the government will open a door for our children," Ms Patterson said.

"Senator Price should support us, not tell lies about us."

"The voice comes from the people," Mr Williams said. "It's a big opportunity for us. It opens everything up for us.

"There's a lot of people who think the same thing. We want to go ahead with it. We will probably never have that chance again."

Mr Williams said Senator Price needs to educate herself about the views of Yapa [Warlpiri for Aboriginal people].

"We've never seen her on communities. She needs to get down to the grass roots and find out the truth, not just speak with to the few people who will talk to her."

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